



DISASTER NEWS



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY -- FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MORE THAN \$5.2 MILLION IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE APPROVED; 1,563 HAVE APPLIED FOR ASSISTANCE

JACKSON, Miss. January 17, 2002 -- Federal and state disaster assistance to the 17 disaster-stricken Mississippi counties reached \$5,237,601, today. Applications totaling 1,563 have been received from individuals, families and business owners who sustained disaster losses resulting from the severe storms, tornadoes and flooding which occurred between November 24 and December 17, 2001.

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has approved Individual and Family Grant checks to 371 families totaling \$1,121,722, while \$1,010,479 in disaster housing assistance checks was sent to 742 families. The U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved 56 low interest disaster recovery loans for a total of \$3,105,400, so far.

Leon Shaifer, the state coordinating officer for disaster assistance said, "If you suffered damage resulting from the recent severe weather and have not registered for assistance yet, I urge you to do so now. Time is running out. The deadline to apply for assistance is February 5.

Applications received so far by county are: Bolivar, 131; Coahoma, 32; DeSoto, 142; Grenada, 6; Hinds, 5; Humphreys, 168; Lafayette, 14; Leake, 7; Madison, 107; Panola, 177; Quitman, 360; Scott, 3; Sunflower, 97; Tallahatchie, 53; Tate, 24; Tunica, 43; and Washington, 194.

Gracia Szczech, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's official in charge of the recovery effort, said, "To register for disaster assistance is really very easy. You make one toll-free phone call to FEMA and provide some basic information. Typically, it takes about 15 to 20 minutes. That's all there is to getting the process started."

The FEMA toll-free registration number is **1-800-621-3362**. The number for the hearing or speech impaired to call is **1-800-462-7585**.

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